

Independent claim 24 recites, *inter alia*, at least one key configured to be fixed to one of the first or second housing portions, and to be slidably inserted into the other of the first and second housing portions so as to slidably couple the first housing portion and the second housing portion. Donkin neither discloses nor suggests such features.

Donkin discloses an actuator assembly 10 for a disc drive with a composite bearing 18 set between top and bottom portions 14 and 22 of the yoke 12. The composite bearing 18 includes an outer axial ring 42 which forms a transition fitting with the top portion 14 of the yoke 12, and an inner axial ring 46 which is free to move in the direction of the axis of the shaft 20 relative to the outer axial ring 42. A plurality of balls 44 are provided in the space formed between the inner and outer axial rings 46 and 42, and the material and sizing of the inner and outer axial rings 46 and 42 and the balls 44 are such that movement of the inner axial ring 46 relative to the outer axial ring 42 is prevented until a predetermined force in the direction of the axis of the shaft 20 has been exceeded (see column 4, lines 50-50 of Donkin).

It appears the Examiner has drawn a comparison between the plurality of balls 44 disclosed by Donkin and the at least one key recited in independent claim 24. However, the plurality of balls 44 disclosed by Donkin are free to move within the space formed between the inner and outer axial rings 46 and 42, and are not fixed to either of the axial rings 42 or 46. Rather, the free motion of the plurality of balls 44 within that space and the spherical shape of the plurality of balls 44 facilitate that movement. That is, as a force is generated which causes

the shaft to expand, the outer circumferential surface of the inner axial ring 46 moves along the spherical surfaces of the plurality of balls 44, allowing the inner axial ring 46 to move while the outer axial ring 42 remains fixed. Thus, Donkin does not disclose or suggest that the plurality of balls 44 is fixed to either the inner axial ring 46 or the outer axial ring 42.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 24 is not anticipated by Donkin, and thus the rejection of independent claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Donkin should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 25-29 are allowable at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 24, from which they depend, as well as for their added features.

the shaft to expand, the outer circumferential surface of the inner axial ring 46 moves along the spherical surfaces of the plurality of balls 44, allowing the inner axial ring 46 to move while the outer axial ring 42 remains fixed. Thus, Donkin does not disclose or suggest that the plurality of balls 44 is fixed to either the inner axial ring 46 or the outer axial ring 42.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 24 is not anticipated by Donkin, and thus the rejection of independent claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Donkin should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 25-29 are allowable at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 24, from which they depend, as well as for their added features.

Serial No. 10/058,385  
Amendment dated **July 6, 2004**  
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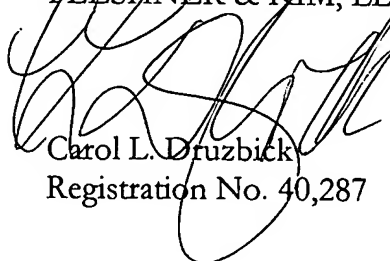
Docket No. MRE-0052

### **CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, **Carol L. Druzbeck**, at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,  
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